

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the Office Action mailed on January 3, 2007. Reexamination in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 37-52 are currently pending in this application, with claims 37, 40, 42, 44, 48, and 51 being independent.

No new matter has been added.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 37-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0091089 to Bjerre.

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action indicates that the allowance of claims 37-43 have been withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference to Bjerre.

In response, if the allowance of claims 37-43 is not forthcoming at the very least and a new grounds of rejection made, then a **new non-final Office Action** is respectfully requested at least for the following reasons.

This rejection is traversed at least for the following reasons.

The above-identified application is entitled to benefit of the filing date of Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-098555. This Japanese Patent Application has a priority date of March 31, 2000. A certified English translation of Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-098555 has been previously filed on November 12, 2004.

However, the filing date for Bjerre of November 22, 2004 is later than the priority date of the Japanese Patent Application.

Bjerre appears to claim the benefit of provisional application No. 60/238,454. However, the filing date for the Bjerre provisional application of October 10, 2000 is later than the priority date of March 31, 2000 for the Japanese Patent Application.

Thus, Bjerre is unavailable as prior art.

Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Newly added claims

Claims 44-52 are allowable at least for the reasons provided hereinabove.

Allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone Brian K. Dutton, Reg. No. 47,255, at 202-955-8753 or the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

If any fee is required or any overpayment made, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee or credit the overpayment to Deposit Account # 18-0013.

Dated: February 16, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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